

**HALIFAX REGIONAL MUNICIPALITY  
SOLID WASTE/RESOURCE ADVISORY COMMITTEE**

**MINUTES OF MEETING  
SEPTEMBER 9, 1998 @ 3:00 P.M.  
Council Chambers, 2750 Dutch Village Road**

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**Present: Deputy Mayor Reg Rankin, Chairman  
Councillor Jack Mitchell  
Councillor John Cunningham  
Councillor Sheila Fougere**

**Others: Councillor Jerry Blumenthal  
Councillor Russell Walker  
Mark Bernard, Manager, Waste Resources  
Jim Bauld, Operations Coordinator  
Barbara I. Moar, Assistant Municipal Clerk**

**Regrets: Mayor Walter Fitzgerald  
Councillor Ron Cooper  
Councillor Gordon R. Snow**

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## 1. CALL TO ORDER AND APPROVAL OF AGENDA

The Chairman asked if there were any additions or deletions to the Agenda. The following items were added:

- **Councillor Walker - 3 letters to be tabled**
- **Councillor Blumenthal - Garbage Collection from Non-profit Organizations**
- **Councillor Cunningham - Odours from Organic Carts**
- **Councillor Mitchell - Notice to Householders**

There was some delay while the Committee waited for another member to arrive to meet the requirement for a quorum. Ms. Moar advised that Councillor Fougere had confirmed that she would attend today's meeting, but that she would be a little late. The Chairman welcomed Councillors Blumenthal and Walker to the meeting.

The Chairman expressed regrets from Committee members that were absent today. He said he regretted the difficulties in getting a quorum. As solid waste management is one of the major issues in HRM, he would expect that there would never be a problem getting a quorum, especially as the meetings are set up on a regular basis. The last meeting was held on June 24th and there was no quorum for that meeting.

It was agreed that there could be some discussion on the added items without a quorum as there would be no recommendations at this point in time.

### Letters Tabled by Councillor Walker

Councillor Walker stated he would provide staff with the letters to be tabled. He asked staff to reply to the letters, and to send him copies. One letter is from Joseph Ryan who is complaining about regular garbage only being picked up every two weeks, instead of every week. The other letter was from Ronald Grantham who appeared before the Community Council who gave assurances that certain things would take place. In Mr. Grantham's opinion they are not, including the use of brown paper bags in the organic carts. He questioned why the Committee is not following through on that suggestion?

Mr. Grantham also had a concern that the carts are not child and animal proof as had been previously indicated. Another concern in Mr. Grantham's letter was that residents were washing their carts into the street and he feels this is a health hazard. Mr. Bauld responded with respect to animal disturbance, that if the cart is placed in a 'stand alone' position and not placed beside a building or a deck an animal cannot open it because they would have to sit on the lid to open the cart. It depends on the placement of the cart as to whether it can be opened.

Councillor Walker said his last letter was from Mrs. Lemenski who lives at 408 Frederick Avenue. She is the owner of a duplex and has received her organic cart, but is requesting a second bin for her tenants. Mr. Bernard said staff are looking at the whole issue of duplexes, triplexes etc. and are in the process of making a decision on how to deal with them.

It was agreed that staff would provide the Committee with copies of the letters from residents and the responses from staff on how their concerns will be addressed.

### **Garbage Collection from Non-profit Organizations - Councillor Blumenthal**

Councillor Blumenthal reported that he had received many calls from non-profit organizations. These organizations stated that they had always thought they were part of residential, not commercial. Some have advised Councillor Blumenthal that they have been told that they could apply for grants to have their garbage picked up, but as it is all coming out of the same budget, Councillor Blumenthal did not agree non-profit organizations should have to apply to the Grants Committee. He said this is an issue that had to be addressed by the SWRAC to help these people.

Councillor Fougere joined the meeting.

The Chairman pointed out that this would have to apply to non-profit organizations in all of HRM and raised the question on how extensive these would be, and where the money would come from to pay for these collections? Would it come from grants or an increase in property taxes? In response to a staff comment that it would be very difficult for staff to know just what would be included, Councillor Blumenthal responded that he is asking about groups that have had their garbage collected previously. Councillor Cunningham said it could be that some non profit organizations that did not have collections previously would want them now if others did receive it. It was agreed that staff would prepare a report for the next Committee meeting.

**MOVED By Councillor Mitchell, seconded by Councillor Cunningham THAT the Agenda be approved as amended. MOTION PUT AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

## **2. PRESENTATIONS BY MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC**

### **2.1 Kate Carmichael, Downtown Halifax Business Commission -ICI Collection Program**

Ms. Carmichael, Executive Director of the Downtown Halifax Business Commission started her presentation by advising the Committee that the Commission had received exemplary support from Mr. Mark Bernard and his staff. The Commission received all the required

information, support and co-operation from staff in developing a collection and tipping services for Downtown, Spring Garden and Quinpool businesses. She said it could not have been done without their assistance and they should be congratulated. Ms. Carmichael reported that the first collection day was last Thursday and to date they have 35 businesses signed up. This is a small start but as businesses realize there will be no collection she believes this will increase quite substantially.

Ms. Carmichael referred to possible changes in the tipping fee pointing out that some businesses are purchasing tags not only for one week, but rather for 1, 2 and even 3 months usage. She stressed the importance for the Commission to be notified at least 2 to 3 months in advance of any changes that HRM makes to the tipping fees.

The next issue Ms. Carmichael addressed was the generation of garbage by the food and beverage industries 7 days a week, but their haulers cannot tip this garbage on the weekends. This means that the hauler has to hold the garbage in his truck all weekend. She asked if consideration could be given to opening the transfer station for a few hours each morning on the weekend?

Referring to organics, Ms. Carmichael said small businesses would be generating such things as coffee grounds, apple cores, etc. They do not have the facilities for organic carts but they do have organics. She asked if consideration could be given to allowing small businesses to put small amounts of organics in clear plastic bags?

Ms. Carmichael referred to an organic separation/garbage seminar for the ICI sector scheduled by LURA in November. She stated that it is her understanding that this has to be on stream by the 1st November, and asked for support from HRM in conducting a number of workshops in October before the ban.

Ms. Carmichael asked what would be the tipping fee for garbage that is not source separated? Mr. Bauld said it had always been the policy that the new by-law that is coming to Council this Fall would penalize those who did not separate organics. It is recommended that the tipping fee for garbage that is not separated be \$100/metric tonne. For separated garbage, it is recommended that the tipping fee be \$75/metric tonne. There will be three tags - organics, recyclables and residue. If a business does not remove organics from its garbage, it would be considered 'residue' and the higher tipping fee would apply.

Ms. Carmichael reported on recyclables in front of businesses/apartments that she had seen on Quinpool Rd. and Chebucto Road today that had not been collected, and asked what kind of mechanism would be put in place to pick these up? Mr. Bauld responded that since September 1st, staff have been driving through areas on collection days, and recording the addresses of businesses, stores/apartment facilities etc. that are putting

refuse at the curb. This information is being given to Police Services to give notices to the businesses and tenants to remove the refuse.

Ms. Carmichael also referred to a garbage truck on Robie Street that she had observed picking up residential and business garbage. To be consistent, she felt it's important that persons working on the trucks are told that they do not pick up business garbage. She also asked how many bags of garbage can a 6-unit apartment building put out at the curb every two weeks. Staff responded that 5 bags per unit is allowed. Ms. Carmichael advised the Committee that they are available to pick up garbage from all the urban business areas of Sackville, Bedford and Cole Harbour, and asked if Police Services could so advise businesses/tenants that this is an option.

Councillor Blumenthal referred to Ms. Carmichael's comments re the transfer station, pointing out that there is only one transfer station left in this area, and it's in the north end. There has been a lot of trouble with odours from this transfer station, and he is against this transfer station being used any more than it is being used now. Mr. Bernard said when the new landfill is opened, there will be no commercial garbage going to the transfer station. Staff are in the process of preparing a report on what should be done with all the transfer stations and this will be sent to SWRAC and Council.

Councillor Cunningham thanked Ms. Carmichael for making this transition as smooth as possible. He asked staff to respond to the comments that Ms. Carmichael has made including, if necessary, a compromise to solve any problems. The Chairman also thanked Ms. Carmichael on behalf of the Committee for the work that has been done by the Downtown Halifax Business Commission. He felt there should be limited openings of the transfer station on Saturday and Sunday, but agreed with comments by staff that they would have to look at the contractual agreement before making any commitment. Staff would also investigate the suggestions re paper bags.

## **2.2 Peter Kidd**

Mr. Kidd said he wanted to congratulate members of the SWRAC, HRM Council, staff and others on the organics cart roll-out. As a former member of the Citizens Stakeholders Committee, he is thrilled to see the carts being rolled out and excited that HRM is close to having this strategy in place and thanked everyone involved. He agreed with the comments on the positive attitude of the Downtown Halifax Business Commission. He noted that there is an official opening of the Otter Lake Waste Management Facility on October 9th and he asked that consideration be given to inviting former members of the CSC to this opening, and also to the openings of the compost plants. Referring to the budget crisis that HRM is facing, he hoped that the public education strategy is maintained and encouraged the Committee to support retention of this important part of the budget.

Mr. Kidd referred to what he considers a more important issue than the leash law, and that is the issue of dog feces. He believes it is a bigger problem as to where it all ends up, and it is hoped that more signage and receptacles are placed in any parks designated for dogs. Councillor Mitchell thanked Mr. Kidd for all his work on the CSC and all his support to make sure HRM looked after the environment. The Chairman said that it was because of the Citizens Committee that there is a landfill today, and he added his thanks to Mr. Kidd and all the others involved.

### **3. APPROVAL OF MINUTES OF MAY 13, 1998 MEETING**

**MOVED By Councillor Cunningham, seconded by Councillor THAT the Minutes of May 13, 1998 be approved as circulated. MOTION PUT AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

### **4. ODOURS FROM ORGANIC CARTS**

Councillor Cunningham referred to complaints that he had received on odours that come from the organic carts. He suggested that as plastic bags are not compostable, it may be appropriate to write to the grocery chains asking them to give customers a choice of plastic or paper bags. The paper bags could be used to wrap food wastes before being placed in the organic carts.

**MOVED By John Cunningham, seconded by Councillor Fougere THAT staff write to the grocery chains asking them to introduce paper bags in their stores. MOTION PUT AND CARRIED UNANIMOUSLY**

The Chairman suggested that copies of the letters be sent to the Minister of Environment.

### **5. NOTICE TO HOUSEHOLDERS**

Councillor Mitchell referred to letters that were sent to householders with incorrect names for the Councillors serving their districts. Workshop locations were also an issue in some areas, and residents have asked to have workshops closer to their homes. For example, residents would prefer to have workshops in Hatchet Lake or Brookside area rather than in Terrence Bay. There was also some confusion with the boundaries. District 23 is west of Highway 103, except for Five Island/Lewis Lake areas. Councillor Walker said in the former City of Halifax, the letter did not come from the Councillors, it was just sent out to the residents signed by Mr. Bernard.

Ms. Patterson commented that it had been a challenge for staff in sending out 3,000 household letters especially in the summer time. She apologized to Councillor Mitchell pointing out that they had been working with Canada Post. Staff heard last week that

about five phone calls were received on this and they are trying to determine what had happened. Ms. Patterson said it is intended to advertise the workshops in the Masthead News and public service announcements. Anyone that leaves his/her name will get a revised letter, but she believes this was a very isolated incident.

## **6. UPDATE BY SUPPLIER ON THE ROLL-OUT OF THE ORGANIC CARTS**

A representative from the supplier of the organic carts, Mr. Mike Matthews, gave an update on the roll-out. Mr. Matthews complimented the Committee, staff and CSC for all the hard work in getting the carts out and to have the public accept them. Mr. Matthews referred to a previous discussion on odours from the carts and gave some advice on how to control them.

He stated it is very important to dump the mini bins every day, and suggested getting the message out to residents to empty it right after supper. Wrapping raw meat/fish in paper slows down the problems with flies, etc. The bins should be placed in a well ventilated area, away from the house, and not in the sun. Mr. Matthews reported that it had been his experience that it will take time for the majority of residents to accept the carts and use them properly but when they do most of the concerns will disappear. He said 43,000 carts have been distributed in two months vs their usual timeframe of putting out 10,000 in six months.

## **7. CONSTRUCTION AND DEMOLITION WASTE UPDATE**

Mr. Bauld gave an update on the private C & D operation in North Preston. He reported that the company had met the conditions of HRM's development agreement. They have a permit and are now operating as a C & D operation.

Councillor Mitchell asked how staff is controlling the number of C & D operations? Mr. Bauld said this is a process that staff are addressing. He said that it is his understanding there are 16 land use strategies in existence and that the intent is to harmonize the policies. This will incorporate C & D operations. He pointed out that some of the existing operations are working under a salvage yard permit.

The Chairman said stockpiles are a major problem because materials are being stockpiled that shouldn't be. He believes this is far more dangerous than an illegal landfill because it is on top of the ground and more receptive to leach into the ground. He asked staff to ensure that the by-law includes a burden on the operator that there must be sorting at the front end, and all stockpiles must be segregated. If any aggregate is found with oil or whatever, the operation should be shut down.



Referring specifically to the tender for the Ragged Lake area, Mr. Bernard advised the Committee that staff have asked Construction Services to review what has been done there to determine what was required. The materials are to be recycled or reused, not stockpiled. When a response has been received, staff will bring back a report to the Committee. Councillor Mitchell said there had to be some control over companies that set up a business for a short period of time and then move on leaving a mess for the taxpayers to clean up. He stated that HRM had to have some control over this and asked that this be addressed in the staff report.

**8. DATE OF NEXT MEETING**

It was agreed that the date of the next meeting will be advised by the Chairman.

Jim Bauld  
Operations Coordinator